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UNCLAS WELLINGTON 000722

SIPDIS

USDA FOR FAS/FAA/YOUNG, USDA/ARS/MICHELE WILLIAMS

E.O 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [NZ](#)

SUBJECT: HOLLINGSWORTH-NEW ZEALAND COUNTRY CLEARANCE

REF USDA 673432

1. Embassy grants country clearance to USDA official, Robert Hollingsworth, USDA/ARS/PWA/HAWAII to visit Auckland and Rotorua, New Zealand from September 22 to October 10, 2005 to attend and present a paper at the Australasian Postharvest Horticulture Conference in Rotorua and attend a pre-conference tour in Auckland.

2. Embassy understands that country clearance is the only assistance required.

3. Point of contact at the American Embassy is the office of Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA. Their contact details are:

Tel: 64-4-462-6012

Fax: 64-4-462-6016

Email: agwellington(at)usda.gov

4. Travelers can exchange currency at the airport upon arrival and ATM machines are readily available throughout New Zealand. Check cashing privileges at the Embassy are restricted to traveler's checks only upto US100.00. Personal checks will not be accepted.

5. Visitors should use local taxi service, which is generally safe, reliable and frequent. Taxi fare from the airport to downtown Wellington hotels is approximately NZD30.00. A commercial shuttle service is also offered at the airport. Taxi fare from the airport to downtown Auckland hotels is approximately NZD55-NZD65. A commercial shuttle service is also offered at the Auckland airport.

6. Travelers can exchange currency at the airport upon arrival and ATM machines are readily available throughout New Zealand. Check cashing privileges at the Embassy are limited to traveler's checks only up to USD 300.00 daily. Personal checks will not be accepted.

7. Biosecurity Fines:

The Government of New Zealand instituted fines for non-declared biosecurity hazards on travelers entering New Zealand with undeclared plant, animal or food material. Travelers found carrying these undeclared items will be immediately fined NZD200.00 (USD150.00). Biosecurity is a serious issue in New Zealand and fines will be administered immediately and without warnings.

8. Security Information:

a. All U.S. citizen personnel serving under the Chief of Mission authority in a temporary status of 30 days or more must complete appropriate overseas personal security training prior to travel (04 State 66580). Employees who have completed the Security Overseas Seminar course at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) after June 1, 2000, meet this requirement. All other TDY personnel must either (1) complete the approved seminar at FSI entitled "Serving Abroad for Families & Employees" (SAFE), or (2) have their agency certify to the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security that the employee has undergone equivalent security training. The contact for this training is Assistant Director for Training at (703) 205-2617. Country clearance will not be granted for any traveler with planned TDY in excess of 30 days if this information is not stated/certified. POC for additional information is RSO Wellington.

b. The U.S. Mission in New Zealand currently rates the threat from transnational and indigenous terrorism as low. There are no terrorist groups or support groups believed to be operating in New Zealand at this time. In light of the worldwide security alert all visitors should heighten their security awareness and report any unusual incidents to the Regional Security Officer.

c. Anonymous telephonic threats and obscure threat mail have occasionally targeted U.S. diplomatic missions in New Zealand. In response to U.S. policies and actions, various groups in New Zealand have demonstrated

occasionally at the Embassy in Wellington and at the Consulate in Auckland. These demonstrations are usually small and are peacefully conducted. During these demonstrations, the host country police and protective